



M E D I A R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INSURANCE

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TENNESSEE FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING IMPROVES

NASHVILLE, TN—According to the State Fire Marshal's office, fire departments in Tennessee have made dramatic improvement in submitting fire reports to the Tennessee Fire Incident Reporting System (TFIRS). In five years there has been a **122 percent increase** in incidents reported and a **96 percent** increase in the number of departments reporting.

In 2003, the State Fire Marshal's Office began a campaign to improve reporting across the state. Educating departments in the importance of data collection is critical in addressing the state's fire death and injury problem. A 1998-2002 study by the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA), ranks Tennessee fourth in the nation in rate of fire deaths during the three year study.

The TFIRS system tracks data on fire incidents from local fire departments and forwards it to the national system managed by the U.S. Fire Administration. Reports include fire cause and origin, extent of damage, fire deaths and injuries, and smoke alarm or sprinkler activations. Many departments also report non-fire emergency calls which make up the majority of all incidents. State law mandates that all departments report fire incidents within 10 days.

In 2002, there were 133,498 incidents reported by 338 departments representing 46 percent of all departments. By comparison, in 2006, 296,560 incident reports were submitted by 663 departments, representing 90 percent of all departments.

"The TFIRS system is a critical tool that is invaluable to national, state, and local fire services. Knowing the cause and origin of fires is essential in developing effective fire prevention strategies. Prevention saves lives," said State Fire Marshal, Leslie A. Newman. "Tennessee's fire departments deserve credit for their efforts in making the state a safer place to live."

The Fire Marshal's office is continuing its efforts and hopes to achieve 100 percent reporting within the next few years. Efforts are also being made to improve the quality of data by providing tips and free training to interested departments.

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